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# MUSIC

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## Comment

Hey, what's goin' on? That's not Brian on 4-track. Sounds like Bruce Johnston on 24-track. Those harmonies on the new single are dense. Maybe too dense. Certainly this is more overdubbing than we have come to expect from Brian, yet sources have conspired to make me believe that it is indeed Brian's work. The production is also unlike that of the man who revels in those certain sounds: tambourine, sleigh-bells, synthesizer; the Spector homage; the sense of rock and roll history. "Goin' On" does not have these qualities, yet it is very strong. I believe the strength is chiefly in the songwriting. Melody and rhythm collaborate on a plot which moves the listener up and down, and back and forth with an animus of soulful fun. Carl's voice, the lyricism, the 'family' harmony, Brian's "goin' ah-on," and a refreshing song structure are all very enjoyable to the Brian watchers, yet in an age of sparse new wave statements the overall texture may be too much for the buying public.

I pick up a sense of 'taking stock' in this production. The group has seriously weighed their strengths and weaknesses, has surveyed the commercial scene, and is feeling around for a synthesis of strength and expectations. Carl's voice and the harmony are hereditary strengths. Brian's melodic gift is still rarely equalled. On the other hand Brian's voice has changed (euphemistically put), and his finger can't find the record buyer's pulse, as regards both production and topicality. There is still a ways to go, but, as seen in "Goin' On," constructive steps have been taken in the right direction.

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Donald Cunningham

## Music Update

With little fanfare the Beach Boys released their new single "Goin' On" and new album Keepin' The Summer Alive in early March. Absent from the new album are some hoped for cuts such as "Goin' To The Beach," "Da Doo Ron Ron," "Surfin' Suzie," and "Been Away Too Long." (a Smile era song) Brian is already in the studio cutting new instrumental tracks.

Promotion plans are heating up for the group beginning with a probable European tour in the near future. A pay-television special is scheduled for viewing in May. It will include the Beach Boys performing some of their new songs.

The July issue of Playboy magazine will feature an article entitled "How To Impress Girls at the Beach," and will have the Beach Boys on the cover. Really.

Another surprise was the first night club performance by the Beach Boys at the High Sierra Theater at the Sahara Tahoe in January. One report said \$10,000 worth of damage was done in the eight show run by enthusiastic fans. Advertisements for those shows pictured only Brian, Carl, Al and Mike.

"Goin' On" doesn't seem to be taking off and one report says that CBS will be putting their efforts into promotion for the second single release off the album, which will be "Keepin' the Summer Alive."

Some Beach Boys helped out on backing vocals for an upcoming Elton John album. Al and possibly another Beach Boy or two will appear on the next John Stewart album.

The Beach Boys are negotiating to do a "Deadman's Curve" type of biographical film.

Lovesongs, Mike and Ron Altbach's company, has signed a distribution agreement with Butterfly Records. This might lead to the release of Mike's LP First Love.

Presidential candidate George Bush was the recipient of a benefit concert by the Beach Boys in Florida early March.

Striped shirted Beach Boys lit up the tube when the Walt Disney television show ran the legendary "Monkey's Uncle" on March second. Not to be forgotten, Miss Piggy sang "I Get Around" on the Muppet show March tenth "-I'm a real cool pig."

The Beach Boys played a Cambodian relief concert Jan. 13th along with Joan Baez, Jefferson Starship, and the Grateful Dead. Joan Baez joined the band's vocals on "Surfin' USA" and "Good Vibrations." At the end the Beach Boys joined in on "Amazing Grace," while Brian contributed some rhythm guitar.



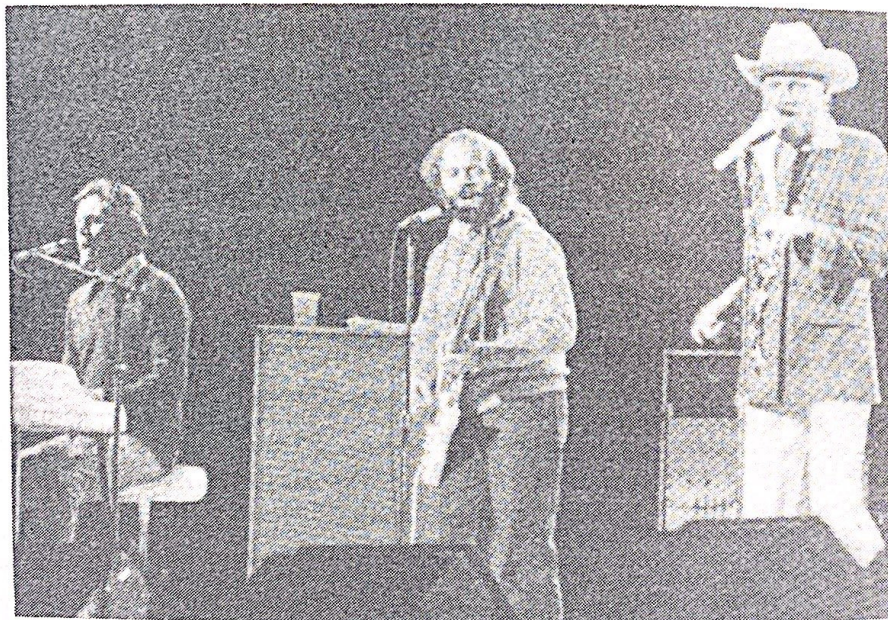
## Letters

Sir:

I live in Seaview, Fire Island, N.Y.-Fire Island being the East Coast's answer to the California myth. The people out here don't dream about perfect waves, suntanned blondes and golden sunsets. We live it. The Beach Boys are as big out here today as they were in the world back in 1964. But you see, there is a problem. We are alone.

The Beach Boys' music is timeless. It's fun. It's romantic. And to anyone with an ear for music and vocal arrangements, it's absolutely mystical. The Light Album was very well received out here, especially "Lady Lynda," which was played on juke boxes as much as their older hits. That's easy to see. "Lady Lynda" can easily be compared with the popular tracks off Pet Sounds. The thing that puzzles the hell out of me is why are Fire Islanders and the British the only folks who realize that? If Henry Gross can have a hit with "Shannon," and First Class can have a hit with "Beach Baby," why can't the Beach Boys get a single or, let alone, an album on the charts?

I do admit that the three albums preceeding Holland have been far below Beach Boys' standards, basing that on two things: 1) The overuse of the moog and 2) very poor album cover design (that's the problem with the Light Album). But with music like "Lady Lynda," "Good Timin'" and "Angel Come



Home," I don't see why it doesn't connect. The cover art was superior on Dennis' solo album and the music put Springsteen to shame, so what's the trouble? It's just so frustrating to see such a super group lose its punch after so long. I know that I speak for all who like the Beach Boys and love their music and I don't see a solution. Maybe if each one of us just turns one of our friends onto their music we could start something, eh?

Thank you  
Capt. Luke Kaufman  
New York

## Concert Review

by Neal Delaporta

The first summer breezes blew prematurely into Hartford, Connecticut on Thursday, March twentieth. This meteorological magic was a result of the Beach Boys' visit to the insurance city. Almost fourteen thousand cheering fans of all ages greeted the group, and as the first powerful strains of "California Girls" pulsed through the air of the lately refurbished Hartford Civic Center those cheers escalated into shouts. When the lights came up we found that Dennis was absent but Bruce was a Beach Boy again. Brian lent his incomparable presence to the entire set. Besides the five Beach Boys the musical ensemble was comprised of Mark Guercio on bass, Bobby Figueroa on drums, and helping out on keyboards was Mike Meros. This musical amalgam was more than apt in their interpretation of the many classic Wilson tunes.

Speaking of repertoire, missing this night were "Peggy Sue," "Roller Skating Child," "It's OK," "Angel Come Home," and, of course, "You Are So Beautiful." Additions were simply "I Write the Songs," which Bruce did solo (as he did in New York last March), and a surprising 'oldie' which Mike introduced as "...a song we have not done in fifteen years." It was...you guessed it..."Long, Tall Texan."

From a strictly theatrical standpoint the show was impressive in a literal sense, in a variety of ways. First, the stage setting, amplification system, and concert grand piano were a strikingly stark, but hardly austere, regal, snow white. Adding to this brilliant effect was a well designed and well executed lighting display which featured a cyclo-ramic palm tree projection on the upstage screen during "Catch a Wave," and included mood lighting for each of the definitive 'movements' of the evening's musical fare.

The band in general, and especially Mike Love seemed to establish a good rapport with their audience of "insurance types." Perhaps this was helped by the fact that this was



the first rock concert held in the recently renovated Civic Center: "now, if any song could bring the roof down, this next one...oops!" Mike's pre-song antics were well prepared, well delivered, and well received. For Al and "Lady Lynda" he gave his 'classical music' lesson intro. He gave Bruce and "I Write the Songs" his 'music industry' lesson intro. He gave Carl and "God Only Knows" his Pet Sounds/'sandbox' intro, and finally chastised Glen Campbell for "blowing his chance for fame as a Beach Boy."

As a further sign of the performer-audience intimacy that had developed Brian leaned into his microphone after "Long, Tall, Texan" and rasped, "Now listen, who's better, Mick Jagger or Mike Love?" Whereupon Mike countered with, "Who's better at songwriting, Paul McCartney or Brian Wilson?" The audience shouted what you might expect as Brian shouted "McCartney!"

Insofar as musical highlights are concerned, perhaps the only single element which eclipsed the ever emotional encore of "Good Vibrations," "Barbara Ann," and "Fun, Fun, Fun," was a moving and magnificently rendered acapella coda of "Lady Lynda." Whether or not the reprise of this acapella portion was rehearsed, one can not argue that this was indeed the strongest and most effective the harmony has sounded in recent memory.

If it would be possible for the 'bigger and better' Hartford Civic Center to have a more special and sincere premier rock performance, this writer would be hard-pressed to imagine it. No better zephyr could have passed through town than the one that carried with it the Beach Boys.

### Beach Boy Bookshelf

### The 1976 Articles

by Michael Bocchini

1976. Like the mythical Phoenix, the Beach Boys, the all-American band, had risen from the ashes of a burnt-out career and a burnt-out Brian Wilson. The 'New Journalism' magazines, New Times, Crawdaddy, and Rolling Stone took note of the flight and dispatched their writers with their Tom Wolfe-white suited attitudes to investigate.

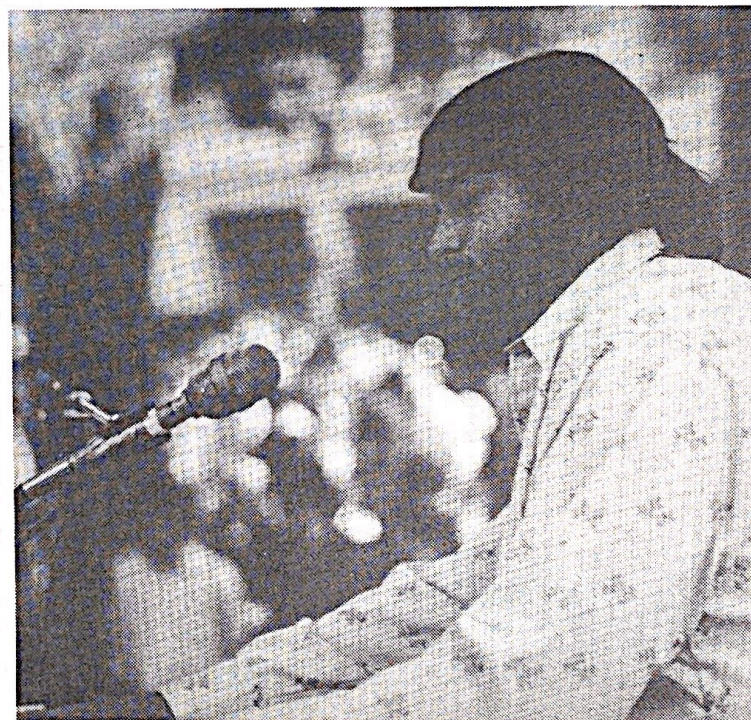
On April 2, 1976 New Times published its cover story, "The Beach Boys: Riding a New Wave," by Neal Gabler. This article predated Brian Wilson's return to the touring group, and Gabler does not quote him. The quotes from the rest of the group reveal that the Beach Boy revival resulted from a separate peace established between themselves and their audience's expectations.

Mike Love characterizes the lean years as a time in which the Beach Boys "...were known to just a very small core of intellectuals...and there weren't any top ten records going every day because Brian wasn't into that anymore." Mike Love sees their popularity stemming from a return to music that is not "...abstract or intellectual or blues or anything like that anymore." Carl Wilson adds, "We stopped resisting our past and having people enjoy our older stuff."

America had taken some fearful and sudden turns since the early sixties and, in a personal manner, so had the Beach Boys. On stage, they proved that they could return to more simple times. In the excitement of performance they could purge themselves of the haunting figure who remained in Bel Air, and the audience could purge itself of the guilt of an age. The audience could "...plug in to the legendary innocence of the early sixties."

For a short time and in a limited space, all could transcend time and space. For awhile, a rock Camelot existed. But the concerts and Gabler's article beg a larger question. Could all this fun exist with Brian Wilson on stage? Perhaps all would not be purged until Brian with his presence signaled the audience that they could enjoy themselves again.

In an article which spans two issues, Crawdaddy, June and July, 1976, it was declared to the world that Brian was back, and also reminded where he had been and how tentative





the return could be. Timothy White's "A Child is Father to the Band: the Return of Brian Wilson" is a chilling piece. White left no doubt that Brian's return would not be triumphant.

White quotes Dennis Wilson to place Brian in his proper role. "'Brian Wilson is the Beach Boys. He is the band... He is all of it. Period.'" Then, through vivid illustration White shows what a fragile commodity Brian's creative force was in the early summer of 1976. White's visit and conversations with Brian are filled with promise and disappointment.

Brian Wilson is portrayed as a man trying to regain the vision that he once possessed and fearful that he might do so. He is shown as a man surrounded by people who pamper him and control him. Here is a man filled with self confidence and self doubt. White captures all the danger and fear of a man living on the edge of greatness and genius which can either be fulfilled or squandered.

His songs of the sixties created this existence and some of the greater songs (from Pet Sounds and Smile) emerged from it. Clearly, all was not "Fun, fun, fun." Yet Carl could hope that Brian would, once back on tour, "...really get off like a dog, once (he got) past the stage fright." Many Beach Boys' fans shared that hope in the summer of 1976.

In the November 4, 1976 issue of Rolling Stone, "The Healing of Brother Brian: A Multitrack Interview with Beach Boys Brian, Dennis, Carl, Mike, and Al, plus Brian's Mom, His Dad, His Wife and His Shrink," by David Felton appeared. Brian was back; Dr. Landy, his shrink, had arrived.

Felton's "multitrack interview" remains for the most part a direct line between Brian Wilson and his father, Murry. Everybody talks about Brian and his relationship with the group, but insight into Brian's state of mind shifts as Felton moves from speaker to speaker in this extensive interview. Clearly, the group recognizes a need for Brian and he for them. But just as clearly, Felton's conversations establish a grinding friction among the Beach Boys.

Each member of the group reveals himself in what appear to be earnest answers, except Brian. His answers and his actions seem at times contrived and contradictory. The varying quality of the questions directed towards Brian elicit a correspondingly complex set of responses. Brian speaks lucidly about his music, but not so lucidly about his state of mind. Obviously, open wounds remain and Brian has developed baroque strategies to protect them. The article is worth reading to explore the twists and turns of Brian's mind. However, from the group and from Brian's wife little is learned about why Brian returned that summer.

Dr. Landy must have contributed greatly to Brian's return

by pushing the proper buttons in Brian's psyche, but Landy's answers reveal little other than his confidence in his control over Brian. Felton's interview approaches the key to Brian's motivation when he introduces the spectre of Murry Wilson.

Brian is hurt. He is afraid. Brian is needed. And Murry's voice commands, "...it's guts and promotion and just keeping at it even when you make mistakes. You can't be right all the time. But the ability to fight back, come back and create again is America. In other words, they're just Americans, they're like any one of you. Got it? Got the message?"

In 1976, Murry's voice was speaking to America. If Brian could pull himself together he would become a living image of America's ability to rebound from the nightmare of the late sixties. Brian was on stage, but the feeling remained that he had not returned on his own terms or Murry's.

Brian was fighting back, coming back, but he knew that to create again he must not erase the experience of his past. A return is not a rejection.

Brian's presence on stage reminds his audience that the age of innocence has passed. The old songs retain the magic. In the midst of the cultural reprise of a Beach Boys' concert, look to Brian's eyes. The enjoyment of the concert doesn't diminish, but Brian's appearance speaks volumes.

## Waiting for Brian

by Geoffrey Himes

(note: the following is excerpted from a larger article that appeared in the Unicorn Times, a Baltimore/Washington arts monthly. For a copy of the original piece send a dollar to Geoffrey Himes, 3720 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218.)

Still, the main game is waiting for Brian. "Brian's had a rough time the past few years," explained Carl Wilson as he sat in a blue jogging suit at the Watergate Hotel. "He spent some time in the hospital late last year because he was really having trouble coping with things. His marriage was in dissolution."

To get Brian back into the swing of things and to revive the Beach Boys' record sales in the interim, former Beach Boy Bruce Johnston and former Chicago leader Jim Guercio have been hired to produce the last album and the next one.

"The idea is to decrease Brian's workload take some pressure off him," Carl continued. What workload? "Like organi-



zing all the recording sessions and staying on top of the timetable. Bruce is creating an environment where Brian can relate more easily; he's giving Brian room to be the way he is."

Not many recording sessions are organized like occupational therapy sessions. But this is a measure of how much the other Beach Boys respect Brian Wilson -and depend on him.

What will it take for Brian to return to full productivity? "Determination," states Carl flatly. "When he's really feeling good about himself, then he'll be ready to do it. The personal issues are far more important than any professional ones. A career is just a passing thing to Brian. He doesn't have his wagon hitched to being well-known or a success. Though when he's having trouble writing and says, 'I can't finish a song,' that bothers him. But none of that stuff matters next to the personal things."

Though he's four years younger than Brian, Carl acts like an older brother whenever one probes too closely about Brian's problems. Carl is the Beach Boy closest to Brian, and with his chubby features and bushy dark beard has come to even resemble Brian. He firmly steers the conversation away from Brian's breakdowns as if to imply: "Why don't you pick on someone who's healthy?"

Much of the group's organization is designed to protect Brian from outsiders. "All of us feel protective of Brian," Carl admits, "because he's so vulnerable. When a person's vulnerable, that's their protection, because everyone looks out for them. We keep our lives more private than most people."

Backstage at the Capital Centre, Brian's normal nervousness was compounded by a bad case of stage fright. He answered questions with long pauses as he stared at the floor. His hands shook as he drank Perrier. He explained his minimal contributions to L.A. with: "I was sort of having a rough time."

What had he felt good about lately? "Well, how can I answer that one? That's hard. I like my new house. I'm renting in Santa Monica. It's no big thing though. I like my new vocal. I went ahead and did some of my own stuff without the group, but I'll bring it in. I have a little bit of edge on my voice. It's deliberate. I added a little depth by overdubbing."

With so many composers competing for space on each record, it was natural to call in someone like Bruce. "Most groups have an outside composer," Mike pointed out. "We're a little too close to it. It's hard for me to say that Carl's song shouldn't be on the album because mine is better." This hints at some of the anarchic production leadership that resulted from the vacuum created by Brian's absence.

"Bruce is like a sounding board, an objective ear outside the group," added Al. "Otherwise the guys are so internalized with other things, it's hard to get any reaction from them. Now I'll audition my songs instead of spending a few sessions experimenting."

"For example," picked up Carl. "I played them 'Angel Come Home' and Bruce said, 'Wow, let's put that on the album.' I was totally surprised. I didn't know if it was in the Beach Boys' context or niche." Did he mean that he and the others write songs that aren't Beach Boys songs? If so, what's a Beach Boys song? A Brian song?

"Ninety percent of the stuff I write isn't Beach Boys stuff," Al responded. "That means it's a little closer to the chest, stuff that reflects more my soul or personality, which is only one part of the fabric. But Brian seemed to synthesize a more holistic sound. He took us as the fabric. He made the fabric and now the fabric knows itself."

"Brian took something from all of us. That's the secret of the harmony, because he uses us like instruments. He can see those qualities and draw them out. This is perhaps the best explanation of the difference between Brian's songs and the others." Too often the others' songs sound like one side of the Beach Boys with the other three-fourths missing.

Just as he wrote about surfing without ever surfing himself, Brian pulled out the personality of each of the others and created a music that reflected much more than just one perspective. Which is why Brian's music sounds like the music of a community rather than the music of an individual.

"You can't help but learn when you have someone around who excels so dramatically," Al maintained. "You automatically have osmosis. I've seen Carl grow incredibly."

"Brian's influence is definitely there," Carl conceded. "The chord patterns, the bass lines, just the way I construct stuff is in the Brian school of writing. 'Long Promised Road' is a pretty good example. You learn to put chords together in a way that changes the melody quite a lot. With Brian's songs, you can really feel it; it's very tender; it's got a big heart."

How would all these aspiring composers feel if Brian ever returned to his former role as full-time composer and producer? "My two cents," Mike threw in, "would be if Brian can come up with the material, let him have all the room he can use." In another context, Mike added, "I don't think we'll produce another album ourselves, unless of course Brian woke up one day and said: 'I'm going to produce this album.'"

In 1972, Carl told me that the original Smile would be released the following year. Obviously, it wasn't. But Al proposed at the Watergate: "I was thinking of releasing an album called Fragments by the Beach Boys (with all those great outtakes). I took all the acetates from Smile home with me; they're real good. They're fragmentary, though they all have some continuity. It's difficult to know if you can finish them up at this point in the game."

"But I like them just the way they are. I got three or four versions of 'Good Vibrations.' Carl sang the lead on 'Wonderful' on Smiley Smile, but Brian sang the original which was really crisp."

"The 'Elements' tape isn't very listenable. There's no 11



form to it, unless you're in the mood for a hurricane or something. It sounds like a Dvorak piece or Ravel's 'Dialogue of Wind and the Sea.' If you put it on, after a few minutes you want to take it off because it's so tumultuous. It's like you're on a raft in the middle of a raging sea. The music gets a little esoteric. I like to hear a little melody once in a while myself.

"We probably have the deepest catalogue of unreleased tunes of any band on earth. It was the nature of the group to go in and do that kind of thing. In the early Warner Brothers days, Brian and I wrote a song about an airplane called 'Loop-de-loop Flip Flop Flying in an Airplane.' It had incredible ranges and sort of a Sergeant Pepper type sound. Brian just dropped it like a rock so I finished it. Because of the way things were, it never got out. There just wasn't enough cooperation from the group. It didn't have the fabric."

As time went on, Brian became more and more impatient with himself and the group and dropped many projects before he finished them. Who knows how many songs slipped through Brian's fingers during his drug binges, his emotional rough spots or his recording frustrations. "The most amazing thing about Brian is how fast he works," Mike revealed. "He puts together a song and does all the vocal arrangements right on the spot out of his head. The thing that bums him out is when people don't get it right away. He has it in his mind and you can see it on his face that he gets bummed out."

"Brian has so much energy in him and so much innate musical talent, it's like sparks coming out spontaneously. Brian is so spontaneous that if there's a piano and two or three people around to sing parts, he'll sit down and write a song in five minutes and two songs in ten minutes. But if you don't get it right then, he goes off and drops it."

"For example, one day I went to a surfer's beach near San Clemente. It was great; the gulls were out and the sun was shining. I was with an old friend and we were talking about old times. On my way home I went over to Brian's house and told him about it. I said, 'We should write a song about it called 'Do It Again.' He sat down at the piano and did it in no more than five minutes."

"More than two years ago," Carl chimed in, "Brian and I were over at Brother Studios in Santa Monica in the back of the building on my grandmother's old piano. We were talking about 'Surfer Girl' and just feeling what the mood was like. And it just came: 'Good Timin'.'"

"Good Timin'" is a gorgeous ballad in the "Surfer Girl" tradition. But it's no more a remake of that old song than the recent ballads by Walter Egan, Stevie Nicks or Paul McCartney. But why don't those sparks of creation happen to Brian more often? "Now he's working more on the human side," Carl offered. "For so long, he related solely on the musical side."

Backstage at the Capital Centre, I asked Brian himself. With his shaggy beard and college windbreaker, he looked like a bear just up from hibernation but before his first cup of coffee for the year. "It's a dry period," Brian claimed. "I only write when I feel it. I don't like to manufacture something. I'm just not that inspired." What's missing that inspired you before? "Girls. Girls that I like."

## Discography

Bruce A. Johnston Pt III

by Stephen Peters

This last installment includes additions, corrections, and notes. I especially thank Brad Elliott for his helpful research.

Captain and Tenille

### Dream

A&M SP-4707 6/78

-Bruce does backing vocals on "I'm On My Way," "Love is Spreading Over the World," and "Back to the Island."  
-Bruce wrote the music for Rod McKuen's "If There Were Time," which appears here.

-Other songs done by Captain and Tenille include "Don't Be Scared," "Disney Girls," "I Write the Songs," and "Thank You Baby."

Hudson Brothers

"Rendezvous"(J.-Hudsons)/

Rocket 5/75

### Ba-Fa

Rocket PIG-2169 /75

-includes "Rendezvous"  
-Bruce arranged background vocals for "Bernie Was a Friend of Ours," and "Gabriel."

Eric Carmen

### Change of Heart

Arista AB 4184 10/78

Bruce does backing vocals on "Someday" and "Hey Deanie."

America

### Hat Trick

Warners BS 2728 10/73

Bruce does backing vocals on the title song, along with Carl Wilson & Billy Hinsche.

Pink Floyd

### The Wall

Col. PC2 36183 11/79

Bruce does backing vocals, with Toni Tenille and others.

Paul Revere and the Raiders

### Here They Come

Col. CL 2307 /65?

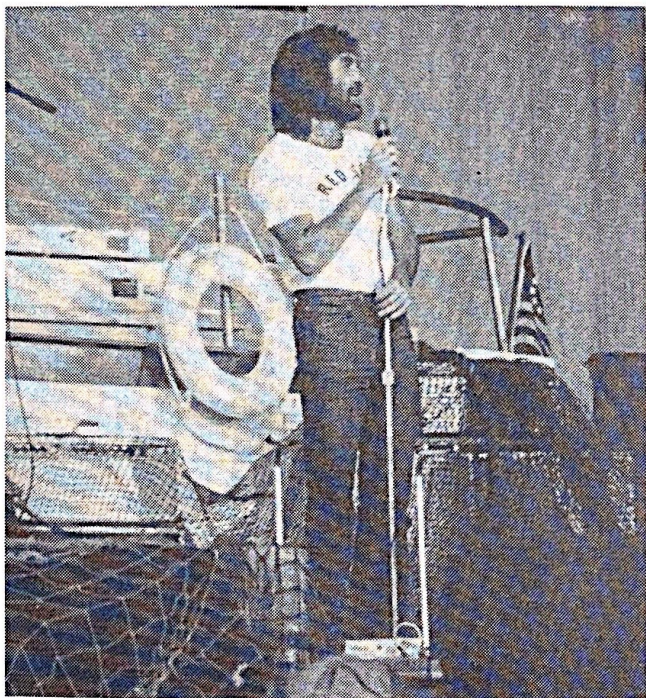


The Renegades  
 "Charge"/"Geronimo" Amer. International 537 /59  
 Sunrise  
 (album) Buddah 5697 /78  
 -possible involvement on these last two.

The following are unreleased Rip Chords/Bruce & Terry cuts:  
 "Lori"(matrix # HCO 71063) recorded 12/17/62 at the same  
 session as "Here I Stand."  
 "Sad, Sad, Day"(matrix # HCO 71323) recorded 4/15/63 at  
 same session as "She Thinks I Still Care."  
 "Sting Ray"(HCO 71639) recorded 12/2/63 at the same ses-  
 sion as "I Love You, Model T."  
 "Wiameah Bay"(HCO 71915) recorded 6/8/64 at the same  
 session as "Wah-Wahini."  
 "XKE"(HCO 72027) recorded 9/16/64 at the same session  
 as "Red Hot Roadster."  
 "Help Me Rhonda"(HCO 72457) recorded 3/24/65.

The next list contains copyrighted song titles which have a  
 high probably of having appeared on record somewhere.

"Falling" (Don Wyatt-Johnston) 12/7/59  
 "Say What's in Your Heart" (Kim Fowley-J.) 12/7/59  
 "Teen Talk"(instr.)(J.) 7/7/60  
 "The Toughest Theme"(Mike Emrich-J.) 7/7/60  
 "Heads Up, High Hopes Over You"(Kim Fowley-J.) 8/29/60



"The Tender Touch"(J.) 8/29/60  
 "It Happened Down at Tressels"(J.) 10/14/60  
 "Pride of the Valley, Sally"(Gene Brooks-J.) 10/20/60  
 "The Bend"(instr.)(Gilbert Quesada-J.) 11/21/60  
 "Don't Put Me Down"(Jim Randolph-J.) 11/21/60  
 "Rock 'n' Roll Honky Tonk"(instr.)(J.) 11/21/60  
 "Bernadine's Theme"(instr.)(J.) 1/30/61  
 "Little Girl (Little Boy) (J.) 7/5/61  
 "The Thrill of It All"(J.) 4/19/63  
 "Someone's Ahead of You"(Judy Lovejoy-J.) 9/25/63  
 "Don't Make Her Cry"(J.) 11/4/64  
 "He's Changed"(Janet Rado-J.) 11/4/64

#### Notes

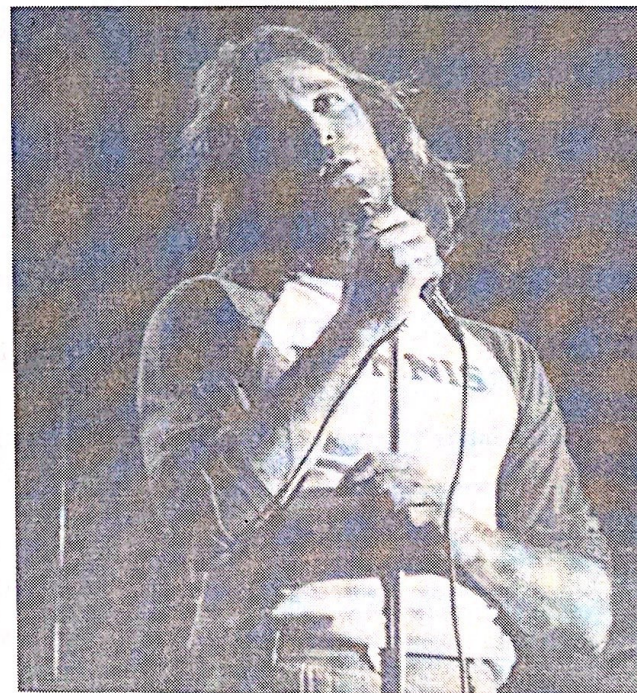
"Don't Run Away," by Bruce and Terry, was actually  
 written by Bruce and Mike Love.

Bruce was possibly involved in the two City Surfers  
 singles, "Beach Ball"/"Sun Tan Baby" and "Powder Puff"  
 /"50 Miles to Go" (Cap. 5002, 5052).

The number on the Columbia Cool & Clear sampler is CSP197.

The Terry Melcher album, Terry Melcher was released in .  
 the U.S. (Reprise MS 2185).

Bruce & Terry did a tag for Tiger Radio WKIM, Denver.





Bruce & Terry were possibly involved with the Pharoah's "The Tender Touch" (see above) (Donna 1327-10/60) and "Pintor"/"Rhythm Surfer" (Del-Fi 4208-3/63).

Bruce recorded but did not release "Let's Visit Heaven Tonight" and "If there Were Time" in 1978. An unreleased album, Tranquility, had eight cuts produced by Bruce and Curt Becher. One was "Warm and Sunny Skies."

Since singing on "California Girls" and playing volleyball on the Party Album, Bruce has, of course, been a true Beach Boy. To finish up here are the Beach Boy songs that have been written or cowritten by Bruce.

"How She Boogalooed It" from Wild Honey w/Mike Love, Al Jardine and Carl Wilson.

"The Nearest Faraway Place" from 20/20.

"Deidre" from Sunflower w/Brian Wilson.

"Tears In The Morning" from Sunflower.

"Disney Girls (1957)" from Surf's Up.

"Endless Harmony" from Keepin' The Summer Alive.

As far as production goes, he probably began to help out, like the others, with Smiley Smile. His first production credit was for "Bluebirds Over the Mountain" and "The Nearest Faraway Place," the former along with Carl Wilson. More recently he is given credit for producing the Light Album along with Jim Guercio and the Beach Boys, and the latest, Keepin' The Summer Alive.

## The Brian Wilson School

by Gary Gidman

Over the last decade there has accumulated a large body of music which might be best described as the Brian Wilson school. Without a doubt Brian's sounds have captured in a big way the musical minds and imaginations of singers, songwriters, producers, and businessmen dealing in such wares. Although a much larger case could be presented for a whole continuum of Brian Wilson influenced product, from television and radio commercials; to movie soundtracks; to three quarters of the harmony in popular music, I wish to present here a

survey of songwriters and/or producers who have directly paid tribute to Brian through imitation. These can be broken into several groups: individuals who have covered Brian's songs; those who have used Beach Boys as backup singers; those who have imitated vocal and melodic nuances as well as production effects associated with Brian; finally others who have attempted to write, arrange, sing and produce a 'Beach Boy song.' It is worthwhile to treat two distinct cultural approaches to this imitation, the British and the American. Next time I will discuss some American works while this time I cover three British cases.

Chris White, former bassist and songwriter for the Zombies, and coproducer for Argent, has produced an album notable for its obvious Brian Wilson influence. (Mouth Music, Charisma 1118) In particular, the scope of his arrangements seems familiar. Dealing literally in four-part harmonies and lush orchestrations, his songs are warm, pleasantly complex, and in some cases outstanding tributes to their mentor. "Surfin' USA" is covered faithfully, with brass embellishments and a boogie-woogie piano intro. "Spanish Wine" and "Sister Caroline" come closest to the mark as original compositions, while "Swing Low Sweet Chariot," with its homespun beginning, Four Freshmen-style break, and full blown finale, is clearly a tribute to Brian's arranging skills. White uses a fair amount of 'combining' in the arrangements, i.e., playing a melody in unison on several different instruments, a practice Brian employed on Pet Sounds, and later on Smile, to obtain new tonal colors which he called "forever sounds." While White's melodic compositions are a bit inconsistent in terms of emulating Brian (and in some instances the same could be said for the arrangements), on the whole Mouth Music is a charming and impressive work, and well worth the effort necessary to obtain it.

Perhaps more well known is Roy Wood, founding member of England's power-rock band The Move, as well as the now popular Electric Light Orchestra. Over the past seven years he has recorded three solo LP's, and as many singles, not to mention other projects with his band Wizzard. His affection for the Beach Boys, and Brian in particular is so pronounced that he made a pilgrimage to visit Brian at Brother Studios - an incident which resulted in Roy's involvement on "It's OK," where he played sax. What the average listener might find enigmatic or perhaps even infuriating about Roy Wood are his production techniques, which are rather raw sounding and heavy handed, and his befuddling tendency toward 'no holds barred' eclecticism - scrambling a langorous Wilsonesque harmony with the pipes and drums of the Black Watch, for instance. On the other hand, much of his music exudes fun, and occasionally he has composed and produced a coherent tribute to his hero. His single "Forever" (EMI Harvest 5078) goes so far as to credit Brian for his influence on the record label.



The song itself features fine vocal harmonies and a delightful if somewhat exaggerated vocal imitation of Brian a la "Darlin'." Another 45 release "Oh What a Shame" (Jet 754A) seems to borrow heavily from the verse melody of "Heroes and Villains," and features a small extravaganza of acapella counterpoint. Likewise his "Why Does Such a Pretty Girl Sing Those Sad Songs?" from the album Mustard (Jet LP2310418- also available on United Artists) borrows from "Good Vibrations" and "Surf's Up," a very noble venture indeed, but falls a little short, due in large part to the aforementioned production. He fares much better with light, fun loving pop in "Look Thru the Eyes of a Fool," from the same album, which portrays the spirit of Brian's work admirably, while not being so obvious in a technical sense.

Elsewhere in Mr. Wood's vast catalogue of record releases there exist countless allusions to Brian, all fragments and mostly fun, but none so accessible to the ear (especially the untrained or impatient ear), as what has been mentioned.

At present Christopher Rainbow's background is a mystery. This man has come closer than anyone in duplicating Brian's skills in the studio. His first LP, "Home of the Brave," is apparently out of print, but "Looking Over My Shoulder" (Polydor 2383467) and "White Trails" (EMI EMC 3305) -are both available. The former is notable for its vocals with a capital V. In the grand tradition of the Sunflower album Chris Rainbow fills out his songs with full, rich harmonies and vocal counterpoint, the likes of which can be found nowhere but with the Beach Boys. Counterpoint may be the key idea here as this element seems elusive to most Beach Boy imitators, and difficult for the remaining few. Mr. Rainbow's understanding and precise use of counterpoint seem to set him above the rest. In "Dear Brian" he has given us what is arguably the definitive tribute to Brian Wilson. Introduced by layered, wordless vocals and a synthesized wave a la "Cool, Cool Water," the lyrics speak to every frustrated and faithful Beach Boys fan.

"All Night" follows "Dear Brian" on Looking Over My Shoulder, and is a genuine imitation Beach Boys song with vocals that defy description. "Dansette" flows with a barber-shop quartet that is abruptly tagged with a brilliant, full-bodied fadeout. This album is a must for the hardcore fan.

While not as preoccupied with Brian's influence as the last album, White Trails is still very enjoyable, and contains another high quality imitation, "Ring, Ring," complete with sleigh bells and harmonies that quote "This Whole World" and "Breakaway."

Considering these three artists, it is truly a mystery to me that no record company executive has thought to attempt to introduce Chris Rainbow's talents to American fans and public in general.

## Song Scrutiny

## Good Vibrations

by Donald Cunningham

In concert that first protracted word by Carl is a killer. Brian probably figured it that way fourteen years ago. His younger brother Carl was a teenager when Brian chose him to sing the lead on his most ambitious opus; his "pocket symphony." Into the Age of Aquarius, out in front of the Beatles, still forging a road for his "group," the Beach Boys, Brian had more than guts. It was as if he was synched into the great power source in the heavens. He had a feeling deep down that he could do it all. Let's have little brother Carl sing this one. What the heck, sixties' justice.

Of course the reason more often stated for choosing Carl is that he had the most R&B flavored voice, and "Good Vibrations" would be a progressive sort of R&B song. He has and it is. When the first verses of "Good Vibrations" soar into sophisticated lyrical configurations it is Carl's strong but passive tonal quality which breathes life and familiarity, so that the listener feels comfortable with the adventure.

As the song begins there is only Carl joined by the closest one can get to a staccato organ rhythm. An immediate sense of drama exists. Underneath a muted bass presents its





own counter melody. Suddenly the organ is mixed down leaving Carl and the bass which are soon joined by drums, tambourine, and wind instruments. Woodwinds descend mysteriously until bass and drums pick up the direction and momentum respectively, pushing it into the refrain.

There is a great resolution in the refrain. Even as the opening lyrics offered tangible evidence in the forms of sun, hair, words, and colors, the opening music presented a myriad of metaphysical questions that must be resolved. The resolution comes in the way of a Mike Love bass vocal statement followed by very traditional Beach Boy phraseology (bop, bop) and harmonies -traditional in arrangement and repetitive use. As if to say the answers have been with us all along, the group throws "Surfin' USA" harmonies behind the "good, good, good" hook, emphasizing it by rising upward. The bottom line is that you can't or you shouldn't try to separate "Good Vibrations" from "Surfin' USA" or from most of the things Brian has done. It's all of a piece. Brian's answer and the way he says it. A celebration. The overlay for the 'traditional' Beach Boy sounds in the refrain includes cello and theremin, setting up a kind of tension of sounds. The effect is less psychedelic than metaphysical or even spiritual, foreign sounds wrapping around the more familiar ones.

Verse and refrain come around twice, and although slightly altered the second time, give a non-intimidating ABAB start to the song. However, a final analysis of the structure yields something like this: A\_B\_A\_B\_C\_D\_B(part)\_E(actually part of C)\_Coda(part of B).

It is the next section, the 'C' part, which might be labeled as the psychedelic element in the song. Here an assortment of instruments present fragments of earlier themes, inverted and syncopated with the result that the song seems to be traveling backward. This appears to be musical confusion to accompany some truly '60's-type sentiment in the lyric: "I don't know where but she sends me there...what a sensation."

But it stops abruptly, and a slowed down religious section takes over. First a meditative organ spells chords behind a tambourine beat (praise the Lord). Then a heart thumping bass jumps in to restate the progression. There is Brian's delicate falsetto on "Gotta keep..." -the only teenager in the choir, lingering in the church, questioning. The choir becomes the Beach Boys: "Good, good, good..." Again Brian's best answer.

Lest Brian wax too serious the song moves into the "Na na na na na" section, speaking at once an expression of both joy and self-effacement. Finally the cello and theremin take a bow together before tambourine, bass, et al. fade the song out.

"Good Vibrations" is the song with which Brian consciously defends his personal philosophy of songwriting. Repeatedly, 'heavier' musical elements are juxtaposed with Brian's own pet sounds with the result that instead of tension we find resolution. Brian's sounds are as 'deep' as you care to make them out to be, but that doesn't really matter. What matters is Brian Wilson, his soul, and his sharing of it with us.

The adjective 'complex' is often used to describe "Good Vibrations" in a misleading way. There are many instances in the song where instrumentation is reduced to only a few pieces, and single voice or no voice is heard. If the song is 'complex' it is because so much is going on in that one instrument or that one voice. Better put, the song is artistic in that it approaches its meaning in an affective and effective manner.

Over a period of six months in 1966 Brian produced dozens of fragments and alternate complete versions of "Good Vibrations." Some have surfaced and reveal Brian experimenting with different instruments and rhythmic themes on his way to the final version. To analyze those fragments would be an injustice because it can't be known how seriously they were considered. The final version is the work Brian gave to his public, and so he must be judged by that. Of great interest, however, is an often quoted statement made by Brian's chief engineer at the time, Chuck Britz, that the final version sounded most like the version Brian first nearly completed





early into the sessions. As if the whole experiment was just that, an experiment, a confidence lesson, Brian eventually trusted his immediate instincts.

The rights to "Good Vibrations" in the United States seem to have been sold to Warners because it is available only on the Smiley Smile album reissue and the 'back-to-back' single reissue, both on the Reprise label. Quite a few European collections contain it, however, and are available in the States. An alternate version, which surfaced on a syndicated radio biography back in 1976 can be found on two different bootlegs: the Hawthorne Hotshots EP, and a 'Randy Records' single.

As a final note there have been no worthwhile cover versions of "Good Vibrations" over the years. Todd Rundgren's 1976 single was a note-for-note 'pure flattery' imitation which nevertheless paled note-for-note next to its model. A 1975 version by the British group The Troggs, is so horrible that one is better advised to tape the recent Sunkist commercials for playback.

After all, "Good Vibrations" is an expression of high art to such an extent that to cover it is, well, to copy it. Either that or to parody it. No artist will gain in attempting to add to the expression of the original artist, Brian Wilson.



## Rare Tracks

## Notes

A high quality bootleg EP which includes "Pamela Jean," & "After the Game" b/w "Barbie" & "What Is A Young Girl Made Of?" is now available. It comes in a two-color (blue and red) picture sleeve which has the "Fun, Fun, Fun" single pic on one side and the "I Get Around" single pic on the flip. The fictitious label is called 'Wilson Records.' "Pamela Jean" now becomes surprisingly available since being included in the British singles set last year and turning up, without its B-side, on Pebbles Vol. 4, also from last year.

The Hansen Brothers, a San Francisco based oldies-oriented band have released a tribute single entitled "Brian Wilson." In a light manner it passes sweet harmonies, falsettos and "bop-dip-dip" bass lines over a quick beat strewn with cymbals. It's got a cute little garage sound and lyrics in the way of "dance, dance, dance, we'll have fun, fun, fun, with good vibrations for everyone."

Hawthorne Hotshots and the Honeys album may have been repressed recently by other than the original bootlegger. Collectors are advised to watch for these issues so as not to pay the high prices which the originals are now fetching.

There is a rumor circulating that Capitol may release another LP this summer which could include rare tracks, b-sides, and even unreleased tunes.

The Japanese release of "Lady Lynda" featured a mix of the song done by Al and Bruce at CBS studios in Tokyo, when the group was there last August.

A three-album box set has been released in Australia which contains the following double albums: Surfin' Safari and Surfin' USA; Pet Sounds and Smiley Smile; All Summer Long and Surfer Girl. Each album has its original cover. The release date for the World Record Club boxed set has been pushed into the summer.

There are two different versions of the Light Album picture disc around. One has a black vinyl base while the other has a clear base.

The Rodney Bingenheimer (& the Brunettes) single includes the voices of Marilyn and Diane, but not Brian. Dave and Dan Kessel have been producing a new album for American Spring.



There is a version of Mike Love's "California Saga/Big Sur" in the can which is in regular 4:4 time instead of waltz time.

The European album collection titled Beach Boys Story, Vol. I has a listing for "Warmth of the Sun," yet actually contains "Cassius Love vs. Sonny Wilson."

As on another album of the just mentioned collection, the new singles boxed set promises "All I Want To Do" as the flip of "I Can Hear Music," yet delivers "All I Wanna Do" instead.

## Good or Bad, Glad or Sad

by Tom Ekwurtzel

When you come right down to it, among other things, the Beach Boys are cult figures. While Add Some Music will never grow to Time magazine proportions, it serves the fetishes of us superfans, who hardly ever get any news or new product from Mt. Vernon and Fairway. Unlike some of the bigger cults, however, there doesn't seem to be enough of us to support the movement of a new Beach Boys album into the top ten, or even to have one of those fan conventions as in the cases of the Beatles or Star Trek. Those freaks number in the tens of thousands, unlike those who are true Beach Boys aficionados.

At recent fan conventions for the just mentioned phenomena I noticed that votes were taken for tallies in 'worst-of' categories. For instance, at the Star Trek meeting voted as the worst episode was "The Garden of Eden," where a group of hippie types invaded the Enterprise and called Kirk "Herbert." At the Beatles exposition the worst Beatles song turned out to be "Mr. Moonlight" from Beatles '65.

The point, evidently, is to poke fun at our heroes. Things shouldn't be so serious that we dare not laugh. These people are supposed to entertain. Therefore this article is more a labor of love than anything else. With that I present my personal top five choices for worst Beach Boy tune of all time (subject to change). Note: the entire L.A. album is not to be included unless a 'dishonorable album' mention is thought necessary.

1. "Love Surrounds Me" -an absolute chore to listen to. The arrangement is dense and senseless; plodding; boring. Repetition is usually a potent aspect of the Beach Boys. Here it is dull, lifeless and meandering nowhere.

2. "Hold On Dear Brother" -Come on. This wasn't even the Beach Boys. A shameful grade for that sacrilege alone. Fataar and Chaplin tried to be Brian with all sorts of chords, but unlike him they gave us no brilliant melody and no interesting idiosyncracies.
3. "Let's Put Our Hearts Together" -Marilyn who? A voice which need not be on plastic. And Brian -a commercial for the anti-smoking league. No redeeming value in sight.
4. "In the Still of the Night" -The worst vocal performance on any Beach Boy record. I find Dennis' flat growl at times soulful, but here it is just embarrassing.
5. "Bull Session With The Big Daddy" -Mostly because Today is otherwise a stunning album. Like stepping from James Joyce into Fanny Farmer.

Okay, maybe I've incensed a few fans. People have their own choices. In reviewing the old albums I think it's important to realize that many of the flaws and fillers were justified. They were errors of naivete, reflecting in a very sincere way the lack of pretension which is a cornerstone to the Beach Boys. The songs sounded as if they were a blast to record, and that fun translated through listenings to the receiver ("Drive In" and "South Bay Surfer" come to mind). Sincerity was so real then. Nothing can capture again the meaning of someone coughing in the middle of "Wendy" (during the break), or Dennis' stumbling during his Christmas message: "and if you hap-hapen to be listening."

I suppose I pale listening to some recent Beach Boy material for reasons already editorialized in this magazine -where's the fun? Why so serious? I can barely listen to Carl's vocal on "Sweet Sunday Kind of Love." This guy can

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crank it up and they opt for the schmaltz. "Everyone's In Love With You" is worse. Spirits were flowing just fine on side one of Holland and side two of Surf's Up until I ran into "Beaks of Eagles" and "Day in the Life of a Tree." Though they were earnest and interesting I felt compelled to lift the needle and track "California" and "Til I Die" back to the flow.

This article began as a good humored jab at my favorite band, and now I start to realize that time may be doing the Beach Boys in just as it's doing us all in. Is that the way these things go? Is that the way they must go? We're the first generation to watch rock stars grow old. Elvis got to be a drag while Buddy Holly remains glorious. Mick Jagger is only just appearing to age and Jimi Hendrix is an image to behold.

The Beach Boys? I want to give 'em up for dead; forget about it; California falls into the sea. But I'll sit through 1000 plays of "Goin' South" for one listen to "Good Timin" or "She's Got Rhythm." And what if Brian teamed up with Tony Asher again...or Van Dyke Parks... Nah. I'm not so sure it actually happened the first time around.

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